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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the implications for democratic policy making and school governance of collective bargaining with teachers. Based on a case study of the 1992 Teachers Strike in Detroit, Michigan, the research examines the relationships among actors involved in the strike and in its settlement. Findings of this research suggest that the strike derailed a reform movement and led to election of a new school board that encouraged the superintendent to resign. Citizens gained some limited attention to their concerns through involvement of the clergy, civic leaders, and the county executive's office. The research suggests that multilateral collective bargaining offers more opportunities for citizen representation in school policy making than does the traditional bilateral bargaining model. (EH)

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Bargaining Over School Reform:

Who Represents the Community?

by

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Bargaining over School Reform: Who Represents the Community?

Abstract

This paper explores the implications for democratic policy making and school governance of collective bargaining with teachers. Based on a case study of the 1992 Teachers Strike in Detroit, Michigan, the research examines the relationships among actors involved in the strike and in its settlement. Findings of this research suggest that the strike derailed a reform movement and led to election of a new school board that encourage the superintendent to resign. Citizens gained some limited attention to their concerns through involvement of the clergy, civic leaders and the County Executive's Office. This research suggests that multilateral collective bargaining offers more opportunities for citizen representation in school policy making than does the traditional bilateral bargaining model.

Introduction

In 1990, school reform soared on the Detroit Public School horizon. Ten of the eleven school board members strongly supported reform and they spent a year under the guidance of a nationally acclaimed educator developing a comprehensive school reform plan. In July, 1991, the board hired a new superintendent, Dr. Deborah McGriff, to carry out this plan. Changes in the city's schools seemed eminent. By 1993, three of the reform supporters were no longer on the school board, the superintendent had resigned and the momentum for reform seemed to have waned. While many factors contributed to the demise of the reform movement, findings of this research suggest that the 1992 Detroit teacher strike was one crucial ingredient.

The research presented in this paper examines this strike and its resolution to gain insight into the effect of public sector collective bargaining on school governance. Our focus is on the impact of collective bargaining on democratic policy making, not on the substance or merits of

these policies. A fundamental premise of this paper is that public sector collective bargaining alters political decision making. How does it do this?

To answer this question, we will examine the role played by a wide range of community and governmental actors. During this strike, the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) challenged the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) control of the policy making process. Involvement by community leaders, further challenged the traditional models of negotiations and school governance, but helped resolve the impasse between the DFT and the DPS. How and why these actors participated provides insights into the ways collective bargaining affects policy making.

Governance Relations:

In studying intergovernmental relations, we often focus on actors and organizations with legal jurisdiction and responsibility for governing. But, in this case that would mean that we would ignore several groups of actors who played a crucial role in this strike. Public sector unions are not governments, yet it is their interaction with government agencies and its implications for the political process that we wish to explore. Similarly, community leaders, civic groups and the clergy are non-governmental actors whose participation was important in this strike. Expanding intergovernmental relations to include governance relations (Anton, 1989) provides the latitude we need to include these actors and helps us understand this case.

The Nature of Public Sector Collective Bargaining

Typically, people assume that strikes (even public sector strikes) involve labor and management with a neutral mediator joining the bargaining process if an impasse arises. In teachers' strikes, people assume that union officials and school district labor negotiators bargain about salary and working conditions. This model, called bilateral bargaining, is based on private sector negotiations. It is touted as highly efficient and effective (Bornstein, 1980). Sometimes,

typically when conflict is low, bilateral bargaining may occur in the public sector (Kochan, 1974).

Other times, conflict escalates and additional actors and issues are drawn into the fray producing a model of bargaining called multilateral bargaining. The 1992 Detroit teacher's strike is an example of multilateral bargaining. School board members participated directly in the bargaining. Many community leaders, including area clergy, political elites (including officials of the AFL-CIO and UAW) and civic leaders, became involved in the bargaining. The county executive's office, finally, became actively involved in settling the strike.

Public sector unions may be characterized as highly organized, legally recognized interest groups with which public agencies **must** bargain (Cassidy, 1979). This means that unions are more powerful than most, perhaps all, other groups vying for attention from agencies and elected officials (Wellington & Winter in Lewin, et al., 1977). This concentration of power may be necessary when bargaining focuses on financial issues because employee salaries are such a large budget expenditure. Often, more than 60% of an agency's budget is spent on salaries and fringe benefits (Summers in Lewin, et al., 1977). According to its own figures, in 1992 DPS spent 58.5% of its budget on salaries for instructional personnel.

Teachers point out inequities between their salaries and those of administrators. For example, in Detroit, teacher salaries rank 72nd out of 82 school districts in the metropolitan area while the superintendent's salary ranks second among the same districts, ("Detroit's School Strike," 1992). One administrator's salary may be raised by a large percentage and it will cost the district hundreds of dollars, but because of the number of teachers involved, a small percentage raise for these employees costs large districts millions of dollars. This means that salary increases for teachers require increased revenue (often in the form of taxes) while increasing the superintendent's salary generally does not increase taxes. Even though various interest groups

might differ on issues of school governance or educational philosophy. Summers (in Lewin, et al., 1977) asserts that all taxpayers wish to avoid tax increases. While he may overstate the position, opposition to increased taxes can serve as a rallying point for many divergent interests. Therefore, as he argues, teachers may need a disproportionately powerful interest group to gain reasonable compensation for their labor.

When non-financial issues become the subject of collective bargaining, interest groups and citizens hold many different views. For example, some may support decentralized school governance while others oppose it, and still others want to introduce charter schools, school vouchers, or many other panaceas to improve education. When there are options that appeal to some taxpayers and not others, unions can exercise their power to deny fragmented groups access and attention to their concerns. In this context, ". . . the '*normal* American political process' is altered not only in the way it determines monetary issues, critical as they are, but also in the way it resolves other matters that, while they affect union members, are traditional grist for the political mill," (Wellington and Winter in Lewin, et al., 1977, p. 43). These authors provide an example of these policy decisions that is particularly relevant to the case analyzed in this paper--decentralized school governance.

Union power becomes particularly dramatic during strikes. Demand for public services is inelastic so there is strong pressure to settle these strikes or avert them at any cost (Wellington and Winter, 1971). In theory, this pressure is mitigated because, when it becomes necessary to pay for the settlement, the public chastises elected officials for generous settlements and may vote them out of office (Moore, Kruger & Gilmore, 1980; Yeakey & Johnston, 1979). In practice, union members, (and their friends and relatives) vote, and elected officials may be turned out of office if they obstruct union demands or kept in office because they accede to them (Cassidy,

1979). Even Summers expresses concern about this when union membership exceeds 10% of the population, a situation he claims is rare (in Lewin, et al., 1977).

Concern about the implications of collective bargaining for governance relationships and policy making is mounting. Lewin and his co-authors (1977) note "developing an efficient bilateral negotiations process" conflicts with "the goal of maintaining multiple points of access required for an effective democratic decision making process" (p. 37). While efficiency is a valuable feature of bargaining, we need theories of public sector bargaining that treat representative government as valuable, too (Jones, 1975). This paper takes one small step in that direction.

Design

The following case study is based on semi-structured interviews conducted with 36 people who participated in collective bargaining or were otherwise closely involved in the 1992 Detroit Teachers Strike. Of these, nine were school board members at the time of the strike, five were school district administrators, 13 were community leaders, six were union leaders, and three were other involved actors. Interviews were conducted over the course of two years. Eight actors (one union member, one school board member, four community leaders, and one other actor) were not willing to be interviewed.

The interviews consisted of a series of open-ended questions. Depending on the level of detail provided by the respondent, they lasted from 30 minutes to several hours. The typical interview was about an hour in length. An initial list of people to interview was constructed from newspaper stories that discussed the role of these actors. As the interviews progressed, some actors not mentioned by the news media were added to the list.

Often respondents were concerned about anonymity, and so interviews, with one exception, were not tape-recorded. Hand-written interview notes were typed into a database of

responses. The author coded answers to each question to form both detailed and summary response categories for each question. In the following discussion, references to comments made by respondents are indicated by IN (Interview Notes) followed by the date on which the interview was conducted. To preserve anonymity, whenever possible I scheduled two or more interviews on the same day. Therefore, the same date does not always refer to the same respondent.

Additional material used to examine this case include memoranda, letters and other documents provided to the author by some of the people interviewed. These and other written material available in public documents and through the news media were used to substantiate information provided during the interviews.

Bargaining Over Reform during the 1992 Strike

In August of 1992, contract talks between the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) and the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) reached an impasse. With school scheduled to open on September 1, on August 31, DFT members voted to strike. This strike was characterized as one of the most vicious and bitter in the history of the DPS (IN 6-16-93; 6-30-94). Personalized attacks and a media "war" permeated public discourse (IN 6-16-93). In this emotionally charged atmosphere, people in leadership positions cried in public (IN 9-29-93, 6-21-94). Confronted by shouting and screaming people, board members at one meeting feared for their safety (IN 9-29-93).

The strike ended September 28th, shortly before school board elections on November 3rd. The HOPE Team members, four board members who swept into office in 1988 on a school reform platform, were running for reelection. Three of them were defeated. In 1988, the DFT strongly supported and actively campaigned for the HOPE team members. In 1992, the DFT vigorously opposed them.

In 1988, the DPS was operating with a $210 million deficit and the state treasurer's office was threatening to put the school district into receivership. The newly configured board erased the deficit and balanced the budget for four consecutive years and launched a comprehensive school reform program. One particularly controversial facet of this reform plan was site-based management of individual schools. This was called "empowering" a school. An empowered school would receive 82% of its operating funds and could make decisions about how to use that money through a Local School Empowerment Council consisting of the building principal, the building DFT representative, a representative of the support staff, the student council president in Middle Schools and High Schools and the chair of a school parent organization.

Empowerment was a major obstacle during the negotiations. Because empowered schools could request exceptions to the contract, the DFT viewed it as "union-busting." A coalition of labor unions sent mass mailings to their members during the strike voicing the DFT's opposition to empowerment and to its advocates on the school board. As a result of this, many actors credit the unions with unseating three members of the HOPE Team.

The new board members elected after the strike contributed to the resignation of Superintendent McGriff (IN 11-29-93). While reform efforts have not ceased, their momentum dissipated. Before the 1992 strike, 15 schools were empowered. By 1995, there were 26 empowered schools, slightly more than half the 1992 target of 45 empowered schools.

Despite the importance of the financial settlement in this case, school reform was an important topic of collective bargaining. When asked what led to the strike, 27 of the 36 respondents mentioned "empowerment" or some other facet of the efforts to reform the schools. Only sixteen people attributed the strike to bargaining over money and benefits. (Respondents could, and many did, choose both of these categories.)

At the time of the strike, both the DFT and the DPS had signed a memorandum of understanding on empowerment effective July 1, 1990 through June 30, 1993. Under this agreement, if 75% of the teachers at a school voted for empowerment, that school would be empowered. On March 12, 1992, DFT President John Elliott asked DFT building representatives to withhold voting on empowerment "until negotiated settlements are in place" (Memo, March 17, 1992, from John Elliott to DFT Building Representatives). This request is referred to as the DFT's embargo on empowerment (IN 7-12-94). "Before the embargo was issued, 15 schools had become empowered and another 30 were waiting in the wings" (Bradley, 1992). During the bargaining, the school board tried to alter the memorandum of understanding so that if 51% of the teachers at a school voted for empowerment, the school would be empowered. The DFT opposed this change, and it was dropped from the final settlement.

Use of money earmarked for school reform also became a obstacle during the negotiations. In June, 1989, Detroit voters approved an additional 3.5 mills of school funding. The board promised that one mill of this, called the Quality Education (QE) fund, would not be used for salaries (Open Letter to the Community from the Detroit Board of Education, undated, distributed during the 1992 strike). The DFT viewed salary increases for teachers as an appropriate use of QE money (IN 6-29-93). One observer noted, the DFT felt that well-compensated, satisfied teachers would be more committed and that this would improve education (IN 9-22-94).

The School Board did not agree, (IN 7-20-93), and linked any use of this money to school reform or at least something that might be rationalized as reform (IN 6-21-94). The board offered to use this money to pay lead teachers' salaries, but not as a raise for all teachers. Lead teachers, who would have 10 years or more of experience, could be appointed for two-year terms and during that time would be paid a salary of approximately $61,500, or 30% more than their

colleagues. They would perform extra duties and have extra responsibilities such as mentoring inexperienced or unsatisfactory teachers, improving curriculum, or conducting educational research. This idea was endorsed by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the DFT's national counterpart (IN 7-12-94). The board viewed this as a justifiable use of QE money.

The DFT opposed the lead teacher plan because, according to its president, "[t]his could be a subterfuge for merit pay and a political payoff for teachers who support building or area administrators." Additionally, the president of the school administrators' union opposed the plan because a lead teacher might be paid more than his or her building principal, (Russell, 1992). The lead teacher plan was not adopted.

Analysis of the Case

Although financial issues and reform initiatives were intertwined in these negotiations, bargaining over reform issues occurred. To explore the policy making impacts of this, we will examine three broad areas of governance relations: relationships within the school district (between the board and the administration and the union); relationships between the school district and other governmental units; relationships between the school district and the community. To organize our analysis of these relationships, we will discuss the typical, (sometimes stereotypic), relationships and compare them to those described by the people interviewed about the 1992 teacher strike in Detroit.

Typical Relationships within a School District

There are many different sets of relationships between school boards and school administrations, some involving contests for control over policy, some in which boards set the tone and leave the details to the administrators (Lutz & Merz, 1992), and some in which administrators establish policy and boards accept it (Davies, 1981). Generally, school superintendents exercise

substantially more control over school governance than the board does. This happens in two ways: the superintendent's ability to formulate the proposals upon which the board votes, and through his or her control of information used to recommend or evaluate policies.

School superintendents typically control the agenda setting part of the policy making process. In a survey of 83 school districts conducted by Zeigler and Tucker, (1981) in two-thirds of the districts the superintendent and her or his staff were the only actors who set the formal agenda for board meetings. In an in-depth study of 11 school districts, these authors report that 60% of the topics discussed at board meetings were introduced by the superintendent or her or his staff members. Only 24% of the topics were introduced by board members and 7% were introduced by citizens.

A superintendent's superior expertise and time generally provide her or him with substantial power to recommend adopting or rejecting proposals. Zeigler and Tucker (1981, p. 42) report, in their in-depth study of 11 districts, that superintendents conveyed their preferences to board members on 66% of the votes. Because board members are typically part-time, unpaid and generally lack time to investigate the implications of proposals, they often accept the superintendent's recommendation.

Their survey of boards and superintendents in 83 districts (Zeigler and Tucker, 1981) indicates that board members often view their role as selling the administration's proposals to segments of the community instead of representing community interests. Even when there is board opposition to a proposal supported by the superintendent, the superintendents surveyed estimate that they gain board compliance 79% of the time. Board members they surveyed said this occurred about 54% of the time.

Role Played by the Detroit School Board

The role played by DPS Board Members contradicts this image of a board selling the superintendent's ideas to the community. Based on their high margins of victory over other candidates in the 1988 election (see Table 1), HOPE Team board members felt they had a mandate from the community to reform the schools. They tried to use the bargaining processes to insure progress on these proposals. (IN 6-29-93, 7-20-93, 9-14-94).

Also, the DPS Board disputes the image of a board controlled by its superintendent. "The board, unlike many others, has a hands-on approach in running the schools, which has caused conflicts" (Adams, 1992). Board membership included highly qualified professionals. An official in the UAW served as chair of the board's negotiating committee. Other board members included an official in the AFL-CIO, three lawyers, a judge, an expert in school finance, a director of a large non-profit organization, a doctor and a member of the clergy.

Some of actors mentioned a struggle between the board and the superintendent for control in running the DPS and see this reflected in the bargaining process (IN 7-2-93; 7-20-93; 9-23-93). Twelve respondents commented that she didn't have control over the school board and was used by them. For example, the board made part of Dr. McGriff's salary contingent on reaching a goal of 45 empowered schools. This was designed to motivate her to increase the number of empowered schools so that she could receive her $25,000 "bonus" that had been part of her original salary offer when she accepted the position of superintendent (IN 11-29-93).

While four Detroit School Board members run at large, seven are elected from different regions within the entire school district. This is atypical among school boards and might make them more responsive to their constituents (Lutz & Merz, 1992). Seven of the nine board members interviewed claimed that they personally considered views of Detroit citizens when

taking positions during the strike. (Only one of five administrators and one of six union leaders interviewed made this claim.) On the other hand, when respondents were asked which groups or actors involved in the strike best represented the views of Detroit citizens, only four named the school board, and two of these were board members.

While they ultimately approve or reject the settlement, board members generally delegate the actual bargaining to school administrators. During this strike, a small group of reform board members had on-going involvement in the negotiations, and after Wayne County Circuit Judge Colombo, at the request of the mediator, ordered the board members to be present at the bargaining table, all members of the board remained at the Michigan Employee Relations Commission (MERC) office during bargaining sessions. With the benefit of hindsight, some board members noted that the results of the election might have been different if the board had not obeyed the judge's order (IN 7-12-94; 8-8-94).

Within the board, positions varied from hard-line to more conciliatory. Committees handled most of the bargaining issues. When asked about specific aspects of the bargaining, some board members commented that another member was in charge of that issue (IN 8-12-93) and that he or she accepted the other person's position (IN 11-29-93; 9-14-94), but there were also charges of secret meetings that excluded some board members (IN 11-29-93), committees whose members had not met for months (IN 7-20-93), and allegations that some board members did not know what was happening (IN 9-23-93; 6-29-93). This suggests that only a small group of board members actively participated in the specifics of bargaining.

Role Played by School Administrators

Zeigler and Tucker note that collective bargaining means that "[u]ltimately, the entire policy-proposal phase could be encompassed in the bargaining between the teacher organizations

and a professional bargainer representing the board and administration." (1981, p. 50). The actor who would be expected to play the major management role, the DPS labor negotiator, played a minor role in this strike. A labor lawyer, hired by the school board, seemed to do most of the negotiating (IN 11-29-93) and the superintendent and the district's labor negotiator seemed to be out of the loop (IN 7-22-93). When asked who should have been involved in the bargaining, but was not, three respondents said that the district's negotiator should have been (IN 6-15-93; 11-29-93; 8-8-94).

Typically, the superintendent stays in the background and provides guidance and direction to the district's labor negotiator. Four respondents felt Dr. McGriff should have followed this pattern (IN 6-15-93; 6-16-93; 6-23-93; 7-27-93). Instead, she became involved in the bargaining, and 13 respondents commented that she was an ineffective negotiator because she was strident and lacked experience in collective bargaining.

On the other hand, she created a group, called the First Commission, composed of community leaders sympathetic to school reform, several of whom had close ties to organized labor. The mission of the this group was to avert a strike, and ten respondents viewed its efforts as helpful. During the strike, the First Commission "called the mediator and prevailed on him to bring the school board members into his process and to the table" (Sheffield, 1992b). Its neutrality was suspect, however. Despite inclusion of labor leaders among its members (IN 6-16-93; 7-2-93; 7-22-93; 8-12-93) and the DFT president's approval for "all the nominees to the commission" (Sheffield, 1992a), some actors including the DFT viewed it as a tool of the administration.

Role Played by the DFT

A labor union is expected to bargain to gain benefits and privileges for its members, and

this, according to 16 respondents, is what the DFT did. In May, 1992 the DFT requested that the minimum and maximum salaries for teachers "be the computed average of the top five (5) BA/MA salaries in Oakland, Wayne and Macomb Counties" (Detroit Federation of Teachers Proposals for 1992-93 Contract Negotiations, May 21, 1992). This represented a salary increase of 20 to 24% and was not considered seriously by the DPS (IN 7-27-93; 7-12-94). As four respondents noted, these were unrealistic expectations.

During August, 1992, reports in the local news media indicate that the DFT was requesting a 6% pay increase. At the time of the walkout, the DFT requested an 8% pay raise, and argued that this was justified based on the higher wages received by teachers in the surrounding suburbs, (Wimberly, 1992). By the end of September, the board was offering a 2% pay increase and the DFT was requesting a 6% increase (Letter from Paul L. Hubbard, President of New Detroit, Inc. to Charles Jamerson, State Mediator, dated September 23, 1992.)

As noted earlier, during the contract negotiations, the DPS tried to change the rules by which schools could become empowered. The union responded to this by accusing the district of union-busting because empowerment "cedes the Board's responsibilities as employer to third parties at the individual school level" (Empowerment plan, 1992, p. 2) Further, it insisted that empowerment "would effectively withdraw recognition of the DFT as exclusive bargaining representative in the 'empowered' schools " (Empowerment plan, 1992, p. 2). It filed a lawsuit on this issue on Sept. 15, 1992. Perhaps more importantly in Detroit, the DFT launched a highly successful (IN 7-27-93, 11-29-93) media campaign to label board members as union busters.

Five respondents noted that the union has more power than any other actor during a strike. Eight others said that the DFT President and his team were in charge during the strike. This

comports with findings of Zeigler and Tucker (1981). They note that because of its power, a unions can break the administrative monopoly over school governance. In the process, a modicum of policy initiative exercised by school boards is sacrificed, further constraining community input into policy making.

The rules of collective bargaining contribute to this. Public disclosure during bargaining constitutes unfair labor practices, but a gag rule compromises the public's right to information. Further, if labor negotiators carry on the discussions at the bargaining table and neither the board nor the superintendent is involved, then labor specialists and union representatives negotiate policy without any public accountability, and without any mechanism for public input. Though the board retains the prerogative of voting on proposals, these proposals arise from the collective bargaining process. Thus, collective bargaining sets the agenda and formulates the proposals that appear on it..

Role Played by Other Governments

Three other government actors were involved in the strike: the Wayne County Circuit Court through litigation over whether the strike was causing irreparable harm, the State of Michigan through the Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC) and the Wayne County Executive's Office. In Michigan, courts decide whether to order public employees back to work based on whether irreparable harm is occurring and mediators facilitate bargaining and try to develop proposals acceptable to both sides. Historically, " . . . illegal strikes by public employees are common and take place for the most part without sanction or punishment in Michigan . . ." (Gershenfeld, et al., 1977, p. 24). Despite a court order and efforts by the mediator to end the 1992 Detroit Teachers Strike, these traditional tools did not resolve the impasse. As one observed put it, they just keep the process rolling and go through the stages. It

is part of the game (IN 10-27-93).

County governments have no jurisdiction over city school districts, and the involvement of the Wayne County Executive's Office was unusual, but important. When asked who played a key role in resolving the strike, fifteen people mentioned the Wayne County Executive's Office, while only eight respondents mentioned the legal system or the mediation process.

The Role Played by the Judge and Mediator

Like many others in this strike, the pattern of involvement by the judge and the mediator was atypical. After he ordered round-the-clock bargaining, the judge, according to seven respondents, attempted to mediate between the parties and was present at the bargaining sessions. Three of the six union respondents felt that the judge sided with the board and pressured the union. One actor said that the judge was angered by the DFT's behavior and positions and would have taken even stronger action if he did not have to rely on union support to be reelected (IN 9-23-93). Another respondent commended the judge for making a decision that was unpopular with labor, and commented that other judges just do what labor says (IN 6-22-93).

Ultimately, to the surprise of some respondents (IN 6-11-93; 7-27-93) the judge ordered the teachers back to work. Although the teachers violated the order, it did not endear him to the DFT. Respondents' assessments of whether the back-to-work order helped resolve the strike are mixed: ten respondents believe it helped shorten the strike; seven believe it had no impact; five believe the order antagonized the teachers and prolonged the strike. Several respondents pointed out that when the parties are in court or preparing for court, they are not negotiating, and this prolongs a strike (IN 6-23-93; 7-22-93; 7-27-93).

An extremely experienced, generally well-respected mediator, was assigned to the strike. He was called the hardest working person at MERC (IN 8-12-93). Yet, most actors interviewed

did not credit him with resolving the impasse. In fact, 15 respondents say that the way the mediator used of his authority and the nature of his suggestions were counterproductive. Some respondents say he kept them sitting for hours when nothing was going on, and that the tasks he assigned them were trivial and did not move the bargaining forward (IN 7-22-93; 7-27-93; 11-29-93). It was the mediator who asked the judge to order the board members to be present for bargaining, although as noted earlier some citizens claim they asked him to do this. At one point in the strike, both the district and the union ignored an order from the mediator to meet with him and instead went to a meeting called by members of the clergy.

Role Played by the County Executive's Office

Eighteen respondents credited the county executive's office with solving problems and resolving the impasse. This raises several questions. First, why could the Wayne County Executive's Office do this?

The County Executive's Office was closely associated with several members of the school board, and nine respondents report that it influenced or controlled board members, particularly the HOPE Team. During the 1988 elections, two top officials in the County Executive's Office coordinated the HOPE Team election campaign (IN 6-16-93; 6-23-93; 8-12-93). Additionally, two other reform school board members worked for that office. One respondent, who does not work for the county, reported that when a top county official learned about a maneuver in the struggle between the board and the superintendent, the official said that the County Executive would not support that action, and it was dropped, abruptly. In other words, six school board members had close ties with the county. It appears that these ties provided inside information about interaction on the school board, and that the County Executive's Office, possibly through its campaign support, could influence actions of some board members. Other evidence is consistent,

but less explicit about the influence exercised by the county (IN 6-29-93, 6-30-93, 11-29-93, 6-27-94).

But, why was the county involved in school district politics? The quality of the Detroit's schools affects the well-being of Wayne County. School reform might improve the Detroit Public School system, and thereby, hopefully, improve the city's economic fortunes. Most of the prosperous suburbs are located in two adjacent counties, and if Detroit loses its economic base to these suburbs, Wayne County suffers, too. Economic interdependence generated political interaction and willingness to help resolve the strike and the district's funding problems.

What did the County Executive's Office do that resolved the impasse? The county was not involved initially during the bargaining sessions, but, when community leaders asked a top county official to participate, he agreed to hold a meeting at the county building and work with the parties to resolve their differences (IN 6-29-93). The meeting occurred on Wednesday, September 23rd. At the end of the night a deal had been hammered out, and all that remained was to transform it into official language. To partially solve the problem of how to pay for raises, the county offered to serve as the bonding agent so that the DPS could borrow against delinquent taxes. This will be discussed in more detail shortly.

Relationships Between School District Actors and the Community

Citizen participation is often a misnomer for what Davies (1981) calls involvement in which citizens help institutional actors carry out their wishes, but have little control over proposals, agenda setting or policy making. In examining the governance relationships between the community and the DPS we will be concerned with participation that includes input into policy proposals or budgets. In general, this only occurs through organized groups (Hamer, et al., 1979).

Relationships with the Detroit Community

During the strike, several groups actively participated. They included on-going organizations (e.g., New Detroit, a multi-issue organization; Black Parents for Quality Education, a grassroots organization), as well as organizations that arose specifically to help mediate during the strike, (e.g., the First Commission assembled by Superintendent McGriff, the Ad Hoc Multidenominational Committee to Open the Schools formed by members of the clergy, and the Citizen's Committee for the Detroit Public Schools chaired by an area school reform advocate and retired union leader). With the proliferation of organizations involved in the strike, it was not uncommon for respondents to ponder whether a meeting they had attended had been part of one group or another.

Cunningham (1981) indicates that these third party problem-solvers become involved primarily when the institutions charged with school governance are failing, or a crisis occurs, (e.g., a strike or insolvency). In the 1992 Detroit Teacher Strike, involvement of some community organizations (particularly New Detroit) contradicts this pattern. However, other groups that emerged in Detroit to facilitate settlement of the strike resemble loose aggregations of community leaders, ministers, prominent labor representatives or civic elites. These groups were not formal organizations, and disbanded after the strike. Although these groups were transitory, many actors who comprised them had on-going responsibility in formal organization(s) with on-going involvement with the schools.

New Detroit, a multi-issue organization, had a history of involvement with the DPS and DFT. During the year preceding the strike, it conducted retreats for board members and union members and district administrators designed to increase communication and build trust between the parties. (IN 10-6-93, 6-15-93, 8-8-94;). Its success was limited (IN 7-22-93). During the

strike New Detroit maintained its neutrality, but did formulate a proposed settlement that it gave to the mediator. Two respondents chastised New Detroit because it did not let the community know what had happened during the retreats. For example, one of these respondents said that New Detroit should have challenged the DFT's claim that the board had not discussed empowerment with them because New Detroit held three seminars on that issue, and DFT representatives attended (IN 7-12-94). New Detroit instead acted as a peacemaker and facilitator, according to six respondents.

The other on-going organization involved in the strike, Black Parents for a Quality Education, according to 10 of the 36 respondents, is one person who created an organization to publicize her own opinions. Six respondents said that she is vocal and gains media attention, but is not constructive. Three others credit her with raising issues. During the strike, she was involved in picketing and rallies (IN 9-23-93; 6-27-94) instead of participating in budgeting or formulating proposals. But, her statements promoted the idea that parents wanted their children back in school (IN 6-15-94).

Another on-going group that might have participated, but did not, was The Detroit Compact--a Chamber of Commerce sponsored intervention involving business partnership with schools. Through the Compact, area businesses and their employees invest time and money working directly with students. The Compact tried to maintain neutrality during the strike. Its board of directors, which continued to meet during the strike, includes the district superintendent and the president of the DFT. Two respondents mentioned that the strike interrupted the Compact's momentum.

The Compact's sponsor, the Detroit Chamber of Commerce, on the other hand, openly threatened to withdraw Compact funding (approximately $93,000) if the board accepted a fiscally

irresponsible settlement to end the strike. Instead of helping the board, this undermined its community support. Eight different actors said that the Chamber's threat to withdraw Compact funding created a political disaster for the school board members running for reelection. Some respondents characterized the Detroit Chamber of Commerce as white suburbanites whose kids were in school (IN 6-27-94) attempting to dictate what people in a predominantly African-American city should or should not do (IN 6-15-93). This reaction underscores a crucial feature of these organizations and groups. They must be perceived as legitimate representatives of the community's interests (Cunningham, 1981). The Chamber, with its outsider status, lacked this legitimacy, and its participation was viewed as exacerbating instead of resolving problems.

There are several sources of on-going interaction between the area clergy and the public schools. These focus on joint concern about the life chances of the Detroit youth and consist of providing support for school programs and sponsoring activities for area youth. During the strike, churches operated centers at which working parents could leave their children. Beyond this, the clergy actively formulated proposals to settle the strike and scheduled meetings to which they invited the DFT representatives, school board members and DPS administrators. In the final bargaining session, representatives of the clergy were present, and their support in the up-coming millage election was crucial to the settlement (IN 10-6-93; 11-8-93). Twelve respondents said that the clergy helped resolve the strike.

According to Zeigler and Tucker (1981), proposals usually come from the educational establishment, and rarely from citizens. In Detroit, community actors initiated proposals and took steps designed to see them implemented. The school empowerment proposal and the designation of a reform school board slate of candidates, the HOPE Team, arose from citizens, the Group of Organized Detroiters (GOOD) for Quality Education, meeting in the home of one civic leader,

Horace Sheffield (Sheffield, 1992a). During the strike, these community actors (both clergy and civic leaders) formulated their own proposals to settle the strike (IN 6-30-93; 9-29-93) and pressured both the DPS (IN 7-20-93; 11-29-93) and the DFT (IN 9-23-93; 11-8-93) to modify their demands.

How and why did third-party problem solvers settle the strike?

The success of third-party problem solvers depends on their power (which may be based on expertise or on access to financial or political resources) and the perception that they are legitimate representatives of the community's interests (Cunningham, 1981). The three groups of actors most frequently credited by respondents with settling the strike were the clergy (21 nominations), civic leaders (17 nominations) and the office of Wayne County Executive (15 nominations). None of these actors has legal jurisdiction over the school district; none of them has administrative responsibility for or regulatory authority over the school district. What, then, was the source of their legitimacy?

The clergy and civic leaders acted as spokespersons for the community. When asked which groups or actors best represent the views of the citizens of Detroit, 22 respondents listed community leaders or groups. Of these eleven designated only the clergy. Of the other eleven respondents who provided a list of community leaders and groups, five included members of the clergy in their list. (Eleven respondents said that no actor or group represented the views of the citizens.) These levels of response can be compared to 4 respondents who designated the school board, 2 who designated the school administration, and one who designated the DFT as the best representatives of the citizens of Detroit during the strike.

Legitimacy is a problem for the Wayne County Executive's Office. Participation of the county in city politics is a source of concern for some actors who know about it. As one person

noted, he felt that our kids were being held hostage by the Wayne County Executive's Office (IN 6-29-93). Another actor noted that the mayor (referring to former Mayor Coleman Young) left a power void and the County Executive's Office filled it, and according to this person this was not limited to education (IN 6-30-93). This may explain why the County Executive' Office maintained a low profile. Five respondents thought it played no role or said they didn't know what role it played and two more respondents said the county executive just got both sides to meet.

All three of these groups of actors exercise various forms of power in the community. One participant noted that, while the mediator lacked the power to force an agreement between the board and the union, religious leaders and the county executives' office had this power (IN 7-22-93). What, then, was the source of their power?

There are four primary sources of power in governance relationships: legal or jurisdictional interdependence, administrative accountability or responsibility, fiscal interdependence, and political interdependence (Howitt, 1984). In this case, fiscal interdependence was a source of power for the clergy and civic leaders, and for the county executive's office. Both these actors could dramatically increase the ability of the school district to raise the money needed for a settlement acceptable to the DFT.

The power of the clergy arose from the need to pass a millage renewal. Clergy in Detroit may take positions in elections and sometimes successfully prevail upon their congregations to support a particular issue (e.g., a school millage) (IN 10-6-93). But, individual members of the clergy may not support the same side of an issue.

Some ministers whose congregations include many poor or impoverished taxpayers have a difficult time, or are uncomfortable, convincing their congregations to vote for higher taxes (especially to increase salaries of people making on average more than $50,000 when these

taxpayers make $10,000 to $20,000 per year) (IN 10-6-93). Some of these ministers, who supported the Quality Education millage, felt a deep sense of responsibility to see that the money was used to improve education and did not support use of these funds for salary increases (IN 10-6-93). On the other hand, one respondent noted the some clergy "represent" congregations in which teachers are active parishioners (IN 6-30-93) who tithe (IN 4-6-95).

According to one respondent, the only millage in recent history rejected in Detroit (1988) was not supported by the ministers of financially stressed congregations (IN 10-6-93). Therefore, when the clergy as a city-wide group said they would support the millage renewal (on the November 3, 1992 ballot), the board felt confident that it would pass (IN 11-8-93). This, then, increased their willingness to bargain about raises. Although the millage renewal provided financial security for the district, it did not generate the funds needed for a salary increase.

The need for additional revenue to fund salary increases generated financial interdependence between the county and the school district. By collecting delinquent taxes, DPS could substantially defray these costs. The financial situation in the City of Detroit in late 1992 meant that it could not act as the bonding agent for the DPS to help it collect this revenue. Wayne County had the financial credibility, but lacked legal authority to do this. Based on informal assurances that Gov. Engler and the legislature would accept this arrangement, the County Executive's Office offered to collect these funds (IN 7-20-93), which would then pay for a large part of a 4% pay raise during the first year and a 3% pay raise the second year of the contract. Eventually, the city was able to collect these funds for DPS, but at the time of the settlement it did not appear that Detroit's financial situation would allow this. The city, however, wanted to retain control over this function (IN 7-20-93).

The balance of the money needed to fund the raise came from a "previously approved tax

increase earmarked for education improvements" (Atkins, et al., 1992), the one mill for QE. Its use was justified by additional teacher in-service and planning time, limited "to one hour in length with no more than six meetings a year to be used for inservice/workshop activities without remuneration" (Some changes made, 1992). Funding for the second year of the raise depended on passage of a state-wide school reform bill, which did pass.

Discussion

If we assume that the 1988 voter support for the reform school board candidates indicates a mandate for school reform by Detroit taxpayers, then one conclusion we might draw from this case is that union power, friction between the board and superintendent, and resentment of business outsiders meddling in city politics thwarted the public will. This might suggest that collective bargaining and dissent within the school district undermines the democratic policy making process.

On the other hand, citizens may reverse their support for the proposed reforms. Or, they might express frustration that the school board "blinked" and did not "protect" the QE funds very effectively (IN 10-27-93, 8-8-94). Turnover in school boards and confrontations between unions and school districts and between superintendents and boards are not necessarily symptomatic of problems in the democratic process. In fact, they may be signs of healthy responsiveness to citizens' concerns and the concerns of employees. A strike may be a positive sign when compared to a peaceful facade that reflects indifference or powerlessness of school boards and citizens. The real crisis in democratic policy making may occur when there is no friction between the factions. The key issue is whether any of the factions exercised excessive control. When this happens, then, despite the peacefulness or turbulence of events, concern is justified.

Figures 1 and 2 contrast the school governance relationships described in the literature

about school districts (Zeigler & Tucker, 1981; Davies, 1981; Lutz & Merz, 1992) with the general pattern of relations portrayed by respondents in this study. The school board in Detroit tried to exercise more control over the superintendent and district administration than is typical of most school boards. It was involved directly in the bargaining; it claimed to consider citizens' views instead of selling the administration's policies; it seemed to see itself as the leader and guardian of the reform proposals. The superintendent, a nationally recognized educational reformer, was not content to let the board assume control. This led to a struggle between the board and the superintendent. During the strike, it is not clear that either side was dominating the other, although both may have sought to do so.

As noted earlier, public sector unions may exercise monopoly control through the electoral process, and thereby hire and fire the managers with whom they bargain. School board elections are particularly vulnerable because so few people vote and those who do vote represent narrow interests (Zeigler and Jennings, 1974). Teacher unions are one of these special interests. Summers (in Lewin, et al., 1977) assures us that there is no cause for concern about teacher unions dominating the electoral process unless they exceed 10% of the registered voters. Results of the 1992 Detroit school board elections are less reassuring.

Voter turnout for school board elections in Detroit is much higher than the national average of 5-10% voter turnout reported by Seeley and Schwartz (1981). According to the Detroit City Clerk, in 1988, (the year the HOPE Team swept into office), turnout was 54.05%, in 1990 it was 35.1% and in 1992, (the year the HOPE Team lost three of its four seats) it was 59.2%. The Detroit City Clerk's Office reports that there are approximately 574,000 register voters in the city.

The DFT was part of a coalition of 12 of the 18 unions with which the district bargains.

This coalition operates under the umbrella of the AFL-CIO. The AFL-CIO appealed for union solidarity among its members and asked them to call the DFT office to express support. Additionally, the AFL-CIO sent out three newsletters and a questionnaire (IN 9-29-93) and helped publish a joint AFL-CIO and coalition of school unions empowerment plan, *Educational Empowerment, Flawed Empowerment: Which is best for our kids?* This enhanced the DFT's ability to contact its members and expanded the pool of people to be contacted (IN 9-29-93). Seven thousand of the 10,500 DFT members live in Detroit. This is approximately 1% of the registered voters. The AFL-CIO's 120,000 members who live in the city comprise 21% of the registered voters. Voting among union members according to Freeman and Medoff (1984) is higher than among non-union members. They cite the report of the Committee on Political Education at the AFL-CIO 11th Biennial Convention which reports that voter turnout was 38% nationally, but for AFL-CIO members and their families it was 50%. Therefore, we would be very conservative in assuming that AFL-CIO members voted at a rate comparable to the turnout for the city as a whole (59.2%). This would mean that approximately 71,000 AFL-CIO members voted in this election (and this does not consider their families). A similarly conservative estimate of DFT member voting in this election would mean that approximately 4,150 DFT members voted.

Could the DFT either alone or as a member of a union coalition control school board membership? If we examine the results of the 1992 school board election, the top three vote recipients were not HOPE Team members. The fourth and fifth highest vote recipients were HOPE Team members. The fifth ranked at-large school board candidate (Frank Hayden, a HOPE Team member) received only 2,306 votes less than the 3rd ranked candidate, Rodeana Murphy (The fourth ranked candidate, Lawrence Patrick, was the one HOPE Team member who retained

his seat.) Could the votes of 4,150 DFT members reverse the ranking between the third and fifth highest vote recipients? Obviously, it could. Whether it did have this influence is impossible to say, but given the DFT's campaign against the HOPE Team it seems plausible, even likely. There was one meeting held for teachers who continued to support the HOPE team, but only two dozen teachers attended. As DFT President John Elliott noted, two dozen out of 7,000 is not much opposition to the union's position (Mieczke, 1992). Yet, influencing one seat on the board does not seem to approach monopoly control.

Could the DFT alone have changed the election results for other HOPE Team members? HOPE Team members Joe Blanding and David Olmstead ranked 7th and 8th in the field of eight candidates. They are both more than 13,000 votes behind the third place candidate. DFT members alone could not determine their electoral fortunes. Even including voting by families of DFT members and assuming nearly 100% turnout by members and one spouse, it is unlikely that the DFT could have this impact. The AFL-CIO with its 120,000 members (or the 71,000 members we assume voted) could easily change the outcome even for Blanding and Olmstead. Again, we cannot know whether voting by AFL-CIO members had this effect, but it is a possible and even plausible scenario.

Board members and others interpreted the 1988 election as a demonstration of solid support for school reform. The difference between the 4th place HOPE Team candidate and the next leading contender was 18,323 votes. The HOPE Team received 61.6% of the votes cast and the incumbents received 38.4% of the votes cast. The 1992 election was not a mandate for or against reform. It was a closer election in which the difference in votes received by reform and non-reform candidates was not as wide as the difference in 1988. The incumbent HOPE Team members received 47.4% of the votes cast and the challengers received 52.6% of the votes cast.

The difference between the third place non-reform candidate and the fifth place candidate (a HOPE Team member) was 2,306 votes. (The fourth place vote recipient was the one HOPE Team member reelected.)

Union members are citizens, and if the majority of the citizens wish to rescind their mandate for reform, then that is an appropriate part of the democratic political process. The problem arises when, as one respondent put it, the DFT thinks they are ***the*** citizens (IN 8-12-93). That is to say, the problem again rests on whether one group among those involved in school governance is exercising excessive control. This could have and may have occurred, but we cannot say with certainty that it did.

Often increasing voter turnout would soften the impact of special interest voting. At least in Detroit, increasing voter turnout seems to offer little hope of this because increasing turnout presumably would increase voting among AFL-CIO members as well as non-members. As noted above, voter turnout is already high compared to most school board elections.

Another way to reduce the impact of special interests (teacher unions and other) is to shift part of the process to larger jurisdictions (e.g., collective bargaining at the state level). This can soften the effects of special interests, smooth some of inequities between pay scales in neighboring jurisdictions, but it, also, sacrifices local control, involvement and commitment to the schools. Because community involvement is one factor that often improves the quality of schools, (Fruchter, 1989) the cure might be worse than the disease if we undermine commitment to local schools. While there is no evidence on the effect of this process, one suspects that if citizens have difficulty gaining attention from local school boards, they would have at least as much if not more difficulty gaining attention from the State Board of Education.

A more promising approach involves increasing community activity to balance the power

of the union. In the private sector, powerful unions face a powerful special interest--business. In the private sector, the power and privileges of business (Lindblom, 1977) generates support for actors (such as powerful unions) to forestall a business monopoly in national policy making in issues related to employment and collective bargaining (Freeman and Medoff, 1984). Except for financial issues, when taxpayers may unite to oppose higher taxes, teacher unions rarely confront organized, powerful opposition.

In some cities, the Chamber of Commerce might balance the power of teacher unions. In Detroit, business leaders who do not live in the city are seen as outsiders. Therefore, their involvement alienated or antagonized their potential allies. As one respondent noted, business in Detroit is affected heavily by the tax burden and level of education in the labor pool, but, he claimed, business is not represented in school governance to the extent it should be, (IN 8-12-93).

In Detroit, the County Executive's Office is performing the role we might expect the Chamber of Commerce or other business organization to perform. The financial and professional support provided to board candidates running for office and the offer to resolve district funding problems are consistent with activities a business organization might perform. Thus, a power vacuum created the inability of business to exercise influence in school governance instead of a power vacuum arising from the office of the former mayor, (as one respondent alleged IN 6-30-93), may have created the opportunity for the County Executive's Office to become involved. Yet, because the county also shares the stigma of outsider status and lacks legitimacy as a community representative, its participation is constrained to unseen maneuvering instead of open support and electoral campaigning.

While business (or county) involvement may ameliorate the power exercised by teacher unions, it does not help citizens compete for attention to their concerns or exert control during

elections. Experience with grassroots citizens groups formed to monitor collective bargaining have met with only limited success even when they are supported by open meeting acts and sunshine laws (Hamer et al., 1979). Additionally, public referenda on contracts have degenerated into publicity campaigns spreading half-truths that pander to voter biases (Heiburn & Barnum, 1978). Actions of the community leaders during the Detroit strike suggest that a "coalition of chieftains" (Dahl, 1961) offers a more promising model for interjecting citizens' interests into school governance. Among those helping the board and union reach agreement at the crucial September 23 meeting were Eugene Gilmer, former DPS Deputy Superintendent for Personnel, (IN 7-22-93), Mike Duggan, deputy to Wayne County Executive Ed McNamara, Congressman John Conyers, Jr, Rev. Wendell Anthony and Rev. James Holley, Michigan State AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Turner, and Freeman Hendricks, also from the Wayne County Executive's Office (DFT's bargaining team, 1992).

In Detroit, many of these chieftains arise from what Berger and Neuhaus call mediating structures. Mediating structures are "those institutions standing between the individual in his private life and the large institutions of public life" (Berger and Neuhaus, 1977). Unlike an interest group specifically focused on a particular policy arena (e.g., a grassroots education advocacy group or a city-wide school/community association), these institutions have a much broader mission, often unrelated or tangentially related to the mission of the public institutions with which they interact. Some mediating institutions, such as churches, are based on voluntary membership and, at least in theory, reflect key values of their members that their leaders then bring to the attention of public institutions. This seems consistent with the role played by the clergy who represented members their congregations and civic leaders who represented members of their organizations during the 1992 Detroit Teacher Strike. As one respondent noted, if people

are going to a church, they are in tune with what the minister is for or against, so he (or she) has a right to speak for his (or her) parishioners (IN 10-11-93). One civic leader noted that his organization represented 150 other community organizations (IN 7-2-93). The group of civic leaders and clergy who invited the County Executive's Office to participate and who attended the final collective bargaining meeting were not members of an on-going group, but were a coalition of representatives of several institutions that represented different groups within the community.

In the 1992 Detroit Teacher Strike, despite the atmosphere and rhetoric of crisis, there are many healthy signs of responsive school governance. As one observer noted the strike was a challenge about who was the boss (10-11-93). At least it was an issue instead of a foregone conclusion. Healthy democracies often involve conflict as well as compromise and consensus. The DFT may have exercised a lot of power and controlled the reform agenda, but there are signs that other interests were at least vying for attention. Despite its inability to protect the QE funds, the board did not return DPS to deficit financing to fund raises and avert a strike. The lack of progress on school empowerment and scuttling lead teacher ideas suggest that the DFT may have dominated the proposal and agenda setting part of the district's policy making process, however.

In 1994, the collective bargaining between the DPS and DFT was a notably quiet example of bilateral bargaining. No board members were involved and the contract was settled before schools closed for the summer (Adams, 1994). Professionals, both superintendents and teachers, have expertise that makes their input into school policies valuable, but their voices are not the only ones that need to be heard. There is a fine line between input and control. It is difficult to know where this line lies and whether it has been crossed. The quiet between the DFT and district administration and between the school board and the new superintendent may leave the citizens of Detroit without the access to school governance that the multilateral bargaining of

1992 provided.

Implications for Governance Relations

Despite the unique level of union support in Detroit and the narrowness of a single case study, there are several insights we can gain from this research. First, assurances that we need not be concerned about the ability of union's to control electoral outcomes unless membership exceeds 10% of the registered voters seem naive. They are based on two flaws:

(1) underestimating the closeness of some school board races, which would be even more dramatic in cities with low turnout, and;

(2) ignoring the association of public sector unions with other unions, which substantially increases the number of people who will receive information, phone calls and advice to vote for particular candidates.

Clearly, unions can exercise "hiring and firing" power over the managers with whom they bargain. Therefore, we need to consider the implications of this for democratic policy making.

Despite evidence that superintendents exercise more control over policy formulation, agenda setting and policy evaluation than do school boards (Zeigler & Tucker, 1981), the Detroit school board suggests that boards can, and occasionally do, challenge administrative control of these parts of policy making. Activities by the citizens in Detroit suggests that they can and did (primarily through community leaders) have input into the proposal formulation stage of school policy making. Although administrative control is the norm, Detroit demonstrates that boards and citizens can challenge this control and participate in school governance.

The aftermath of the 1992 Detroit Teachers Strike supports evidence that collective bargaining reduces the policy making role of school boards. (Yeakey & Johnston, 1979). Despite extreme efforts by board members, the QE money was used to fund teacher's salaries with only

symbolic concessions to improved skills for teachers. The DFT hastened to assure its members that the six additional meetings involved only a little extra time and that they would be compensated by early dismissal for students on four of those days. (Some changes, 1992).

Additionally, events in Detroit are consistent with other evidence (Cheng, 1976; Yeakey & Johnston, 1979; Cheng, 1981; Zeigler & Tucker, 1981) that teacher unions can challenge the domination of superintendents over boards, particularly by controlling which proposals reach or remain on the agenda. The DFT's embargo in empowerment stopped and then slowed progress on a reform proposal that denied the superintendent her $25,000 bonus. What is not clear is whether union domination further undermines citizen input, as several of these authors allege.

In a study of citizen participation in school district governance in California and in Illinois, researchers concluded that "[o]ne of the reasons that labor disturbances are so effective in activating citizen participation is that citizen interests become clear and visible during times of disturbances" (Kerchner, et al., 1981, p.10). During the 1992 strike in Detroit, other organized interests gained access to school governance through the collective bargaining crisis. Private interaction between the board and the superintendent would not provide this access.

This suggests that citizens, through their chieftains, can challenge teacher union control more effectively than it can challenge superintendent or administrative control. Why does this implication seem justified? There are two reasons. First, during a crisis such as a strike, conflict escalates and both parties try to amass actors to support their claims (Schattschneider, 1960). As long as multilateral bargaining occurs, citizens interests can be represented during strikes through their chieftains. Bilateral bargaining, which confines the conflict to the professional negotiators, denies citizens this access. Second, although part of the teacher union's power is based on expertise and its unique bargaining relationship with the school district, another part of its power

arises from the election process, which is open to participation by other organized interests. The interaction between superintendents and boards is based exclusively on the expertise of the superintendent and the unique relationship he or she has with the board. This interaction is not even easily accessible or "permeable" to highly organized groups (Kerchner, et al., 1981).

Therefore, when unions are strong, and more importantly, because unions are strong enough to challenge administrative control, it is possible for other interests, including citizen interests, to gain attention in school governance. This does not imply that this access can be gained easily. In Detroit, the system of governance relationships included actors representing interests of at least some citizens, but their success was mixed. The small amount of progress made occurred through multilateral collective bargaining that included non-traditional actors, (e.g., the county and leaders of mediating institutions), who represented different factions within the community. Community access to school governance depends on powerful unions to wrestle control away from administrators and even more powerful coalitions among representatives of community organizations (business and civic leaders operating through interest groups and representing mediating structures) to wrestle control of school governance from teacher unions.

Public disclosure of collective bargaining agreements, public circulation of impact statements of items in contracts and other recommendations to provide information to individual citizens probably would help collective bargaining assume a more democratic stance, (Hamer et al., 1979) but without powerful chieftains to represent its interests, the community is not likely to be a participant in school governance. Teachers have won the right to insure that their concerns are heard. But, the task of insuring that citizens' concerns are heard is unfinished.

Figure 1
Typical School Governance Relationships

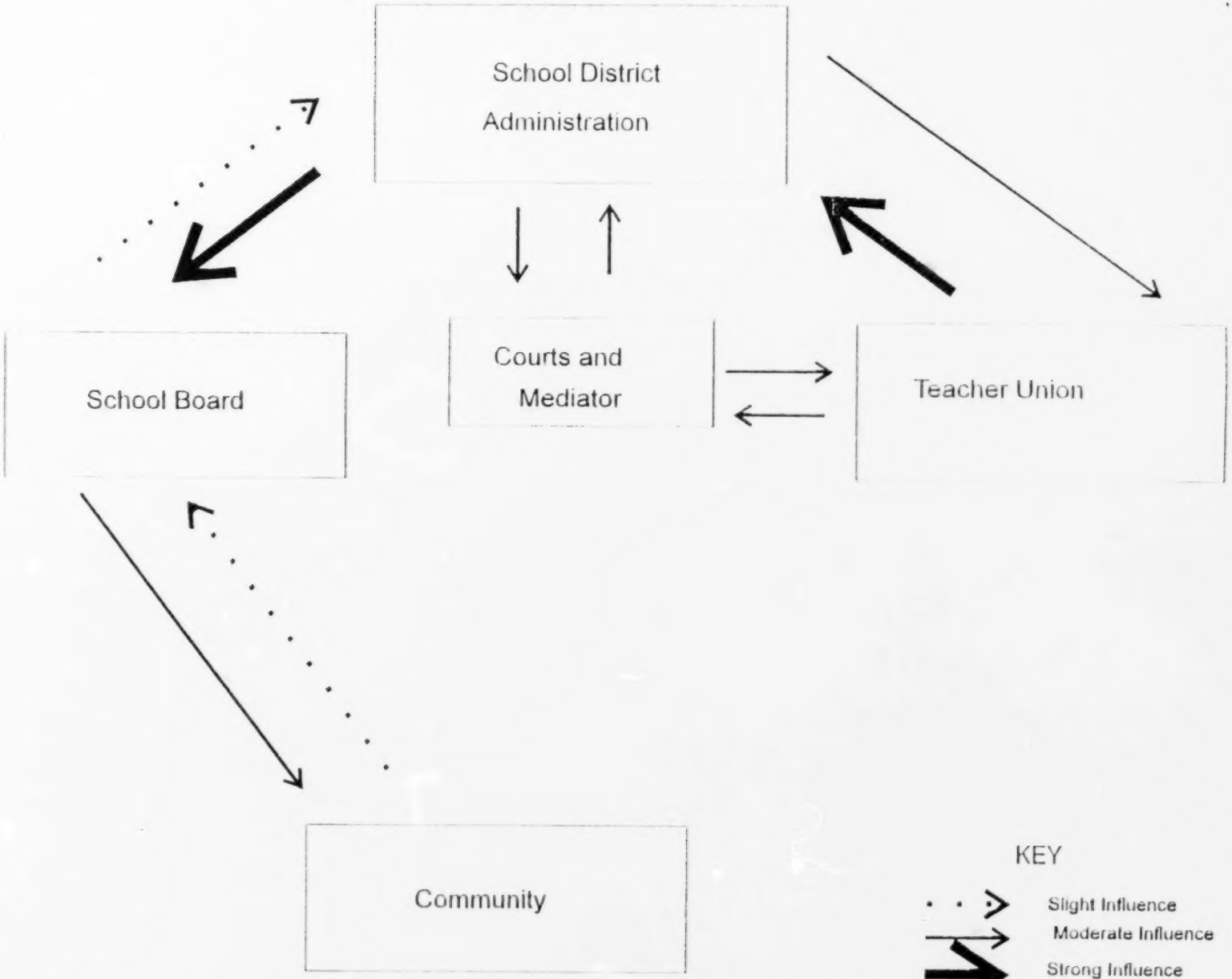
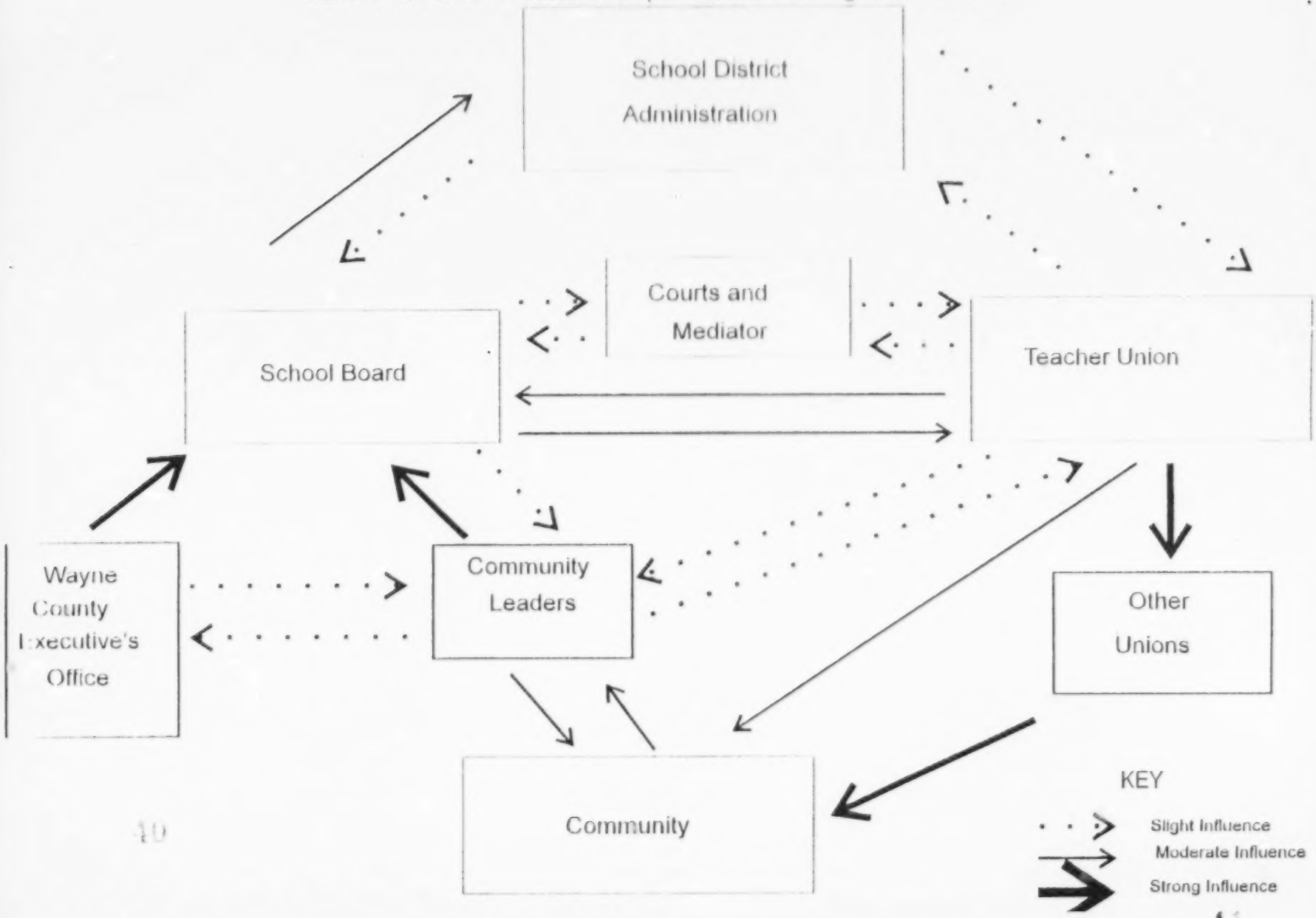


Figure 2

School Governance Relationships in Detroit during the 1992 Strike



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